

GROUP AREAS AND THE 'GREY STREET' COMPLEX, DURBAN.

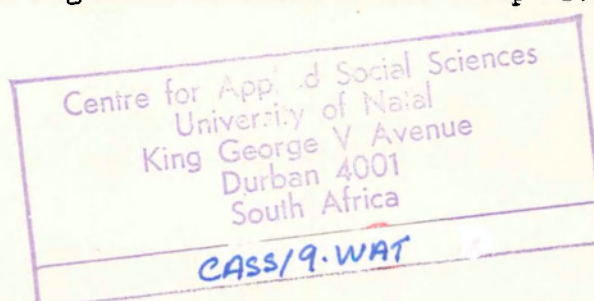
By tradition, Durban has been characterised by areas of Indian concentration and by Indian participation in the economy of the city. This is as true of the more centrally situated areas as it is of the city as a whole. In 1911, for example, the population of what is today the older and centrally situated areas of the city comprised 34 per cent Whites, 47 per cent Indians, and 19 per cent Africans.

The influx of Indian people into Durban from 1870 onwards soon gave rise to an Indian trading class within the city as a whole and within the central area. In 1889, for example, there were 35 Indian trading establishments in West Street. Race attitudes among the Whites as well as other antagonisms resulted in formal measures being adopted to restrict the trading rights of Indians. Power exerted in terms of trade licensing laws as well as economic considerations largely limited Indian trading activity to the North-Western periphery of the central area; an area which has become the Grey Street complex as it exists today. Despite many limitations imposed on its development, it is today the hub of Indian business and commerce throughout the entire Republic. This is its traditional role in its traditional location.

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GREY STREET
COMPLEX TO THE INDIAN COMMUNITY:

a) Description: This memorandum deals with the Grey Street complex as well as an adjacent area of a predominantly Indian character both of which have not as yet been proclaimed in terms of the Group Areas Act.

The Grey Street complex is a continuous and unitary zone consisting of 30 city blocks containing 418 properties. Ninety-five per cent of these properties are Indian owned and ninety-nine per cent are wholly occupied by Indians. At present the Area has not been proclaimed for occupation by a particular race group. It is a 'controlled' area, with all development regulated in terms of the Group Areas Act.



In 1966, the floorspace in the Grey Street complex was divided among various major uses as follows:¹⁾

Residential	39%
Industrial	22%
Shops	20%
Offices	4%
Communal, Institutional & Other Uses	15%

The overall picture is one of extremely varied and relatively intensive development. Although the density of development in the area is roughly 26% lower than that in the White central business district, the Plot Area Ratio of 1.7²⁾ reflects the intensive 'downtown city' character of the area. In the words of the planners Lord Holford and Professor Kantorowich: 'It is the only area equipped to cater fully for the social and commercial needs of the Indian community'³⁾. This is not only by virtue of the variety and intensity of its development, but also because of its central location in relation to the widely dispersed Indian residential areas to the North, West and South of the city centre.

To the West of the Grey street complex is an adjacent unproclaimed Indian area which contains the Indian Technical College, a non-White sports stadium as well as a variety of other institutions and intensive business and residential development. Except where specific reference is made to the Grey street complex itself, the content of this memorandum refers to the adjacent areas as well as the Grey street complex.

b) The Value and Extent of Development of the
Grey Street Complex and the Adjacent Indian Area:

The total municipal valuation of properties in the broad area amounts to just over 18 million rands. The municipal valuation of Indian owned properties in R16,800,000. The valuation of White and publicly owned properties in R1,300,000.

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- 1) William Holford and Roy Kantorowich, et. al. *Durban 1985: A Plan for Durban in its Regional Setting*: City Council of Durban, 1968, p. 68.
- 2) Ibid: page 66.
- 3) Ibid: page 71.

The market value of properties in the area has recently been estimated at £59,000,000. Of this total, the market value of Indian owned properties is estimated at R54,400,000.¹⁾

Recently, for purposes of an enquiry, the Group Areas Board has divided the Grey Street complex into two zones, separated roughly by the railway line. Although the Southern zone is the larger of the two zones, the Northern zone is by no means insignificant, since it and the Indian area adjacent to it have a total municipal valuation of just under R5,000,000, and an estimated market value of nearly R13,000,000. In the Northern zone and its surrounds, the municipal value of educational, religious and other public institutions catering for the Indian community exceeds R2,000,000. A recent investigation by a post-graduate student at the University of Natal, has shown that the Northern and Southern zones tend to be very similar in composition and function²⁾, and no cogent reason exists for seeing the two zones as separate entities.

In 1963, according to the Minister of Indian Affairs, 3191 Indian traders operated in Durban. (This figure presumably included Market stall holders). Of this number roughly one-half, or 1530, operated in the Grey street complex³⁾. The position might have altered somewhat since then, but these statistics are a forcible reminder of the importance of the Grey street complex for Indian commerce in Durban.

Today there are 1831 separate business establishments in the Grey street complex (excluding market stall holders). While the majority are trading establishments, this number also includes 252 tailors and dress-makers, 64 repair workshops, 220 light industrial establishments, 156 offices, and 110 personal service establishments⁴⁾. In addition, there were, in 1966, 121 professional and semi-professional establishments⁵⁾. This number has undoubtedly grown considerably since then, and today includes 49 doctors

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- 1) Information and estimates furnished by the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee.
 - 2) Inference drawn from results presented by D.S. Rajah: *The Durban Indian Central Business District*: Unpublished M.A. Thesis, University of Natal, 1968, p. 213.
 - 3) Quoted verbatim in : *Memorandum presented to the Group Areas Board, 21st May, 1969, by the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, Durban.* p. 6.
 - 4) Information furnished by the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee.
 - 5) L. Schlemmer: *The Spatial Distribution of the Present and Future Working Population of Metropolitan Durban*: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal, Durban, 1968. p. 338.

and dentists and 19 lawyers' firms. Thus, although trade is a major activity in the area, the figures given suggest considerable diversification of activities, many of which can only be conducted successfully in a centrally situated area serving the whole city.

The post-graduate research conducted under the supervision of the University of Natal shows that a higher proportion of business units in the Grey street complex than in the White central area are what are termed 'non-central business uses', which are not customarily found in a typical central area. However, in the Grey street complex, both North and South, units of the central business type nevertheless predominate, comprising roughly 70% of the development¹⁾. This serves to emphasise the central city character of the area. In view of the extreme shortage of Indian land elsewhere in the city for light industrial and institutional use, the Grey street area serves an invaluable function in accommodating certain 'non-central' uses which could otherwise probably not be as profitably situated.

c) The Importance of the Grey Street Complex for Further Indian Industrial and Commercial Development:

In terms of Government policy, industrial areas for Indian development have been set aside at Tongaat, Verulam, Stanger, and Pietermaritzburg. The full and successful development of these areas will require extensive capital investment. Traditionally, Indian capital has been accumulated in trading activity. As the major Indian trading area in the country, the Grey street complex has an invaluable function in generating the profits for further investment in industry, as the Government envisages. If the Grey street area were lost to the Indian community the loss of growth potential in the community would be enormous. Most of the factories, including textile mills, which have been started in the Indian border areas are financed by families operating in the Grey street complex. This is proof of the important role of this area in stimulating Indian industrial development and the diversification of Indian economic life, which the Government desires.

The Grey street area is the only remaining business area for Indians which is close to the hub of a large city. In this case there is an additional advantage in it being close to the country's largest harbour.

1) D. S. Rajah, *op. cit.*, p. 213.

Development of the Indian industrial areas will generate a demand for central office space, space for depots and showrooms, and the numerous other activities which industrial development requires and stimulates. With Indian economic development the importance of the Grey street complex as a centre of communications is likely to increase rapidly. No other Indian area in the country can fulfil this function.

d) The Importance of the Grey Street Complex
as a Centre of Employment:

In 1962, 27% of the Indian working population of Durban was found to be unemployed¹⁾. The position has improved considerably since then, but unemployment among Indians still represents a problem for the community, particularly among more lowly-skilled workers. These problems would be far greater were it not for the employment opportunities which Indians can offer members of their own community in the Grey street complex.

In 1966 very conservative estimates were made of employment in the area. These estimates did not include the many thousands of part-time and ad hoc employees in commerce in the area. Over 11,000 Indians were employed on a full-time basis in the Grey street complex in 1966. This represented over 12% of all Indian employment in Greater Durban. In the category of commerce and finance, virtually 20% of total Indian employment in White and non-White concerns in Greater Durban was in the Grey Street area²⁾.

More recent estimates which include part-time and ad hoc employment suggest that at present nearly 21,000 Indians are employed in the area. This figure excludes 1269 employees in the Victoria street market and 2220 Indians whose employment relates to the Indian squatters market. Almost 58,000 people are dependent on the Indians employed in the Grey street complex, markets included³⁾.

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- 1) Margo Russell and I.K. Allan, *Unemployment among Indians in Durban*: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal, 1962, p. 4.
 - 2) L. Schlemmer, *Op. cit.*, pp. 148 - 151.
 - 3) Estimates based on fieldwork by the Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee - 1969.

e) The Importance of the Grey Street Residential Development:

There are 2279 residential units in the complex, consisting mainly of flats situated above ground floor shops. The present population of the area is between 12,000 and 14,000 people¹⁾. Numerous problems are manifest in regard to this residential sector. Slightly over 40% of dwellings have been found to be either over-crowded or too restricted to allow adequate separation of the sexes. Furthermore, there is a dire need for more open-air recreational facilities in the area. However, it should be borne in mind that the majority of dwelling units conform to standards of adequacy²⁾.

Other positive aspects of the residential pattern in the area should also be considered. The Minister of Community Development has stated that there is a demand from 7040 Indian families in Durban for housing financed from the National Housing Fund³⁾. The Durban City Council has estimated that a demand for housing for no less than 19,000 Indian families in Durban existed at the end of 1970⁴⁾. This amounts to approximately 120,000 people. The housing position has not improved markedly since these estimates were made. It is obvious, therefore, that the Grey street complex and adjacent Indian areas fulfil a vital function in respect to the provision of accommodation.

The accommodation in the Indian central area also serves a unique function in that it is virtually on the doorstep of the places of employment of the residents. Roughly 84% of the working residents are employed in the central areas of Durban⁵⁾ and over 60% of the residents of flats work in the Grey street complex itself⁶⁾. Thus, if this population were to be moved the burden of additional transportation costs for the families concerned would be considerable.

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- 1) Estimates based on figures by D.S. Rajah: *Op. Cit.*, and estimates by H.L. Watts, R.J. Davies & J.H. Waters, *The Spatial Distribution of the Present and Future Residential Population of Metropolitan Durban*: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal: 1967. p. 84.
 - 2) Rajah, *Op. Cit.*, p. 145.
 - 3) M. Horrell, *Survey of Race Relations*: Institute of Race Relations, February 1970, p. 193.
 - 4) Information given to the South Durban Indian Local Affairs Committee by the Durban Corporation, referring to the position in October, 1970.
 - 5) Estimates by Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee.
 - 6) D.S. Rajah: *Op. Cit.*, p. 125.

It is frequently stated that a considerable degree of exploitation of tenants by landlords occurs in the area. It is doubtful whether this problem affects more than a conspicuous minority of residents, and furthermore, it is a problem which could and should be approached in ways which do not involve the forced resettlement of the population.

It can be expected that many of the problems associated with the large residential population in the area will to a large extent either resolve themselves or could easily be resolved in years to come, as will be discussed later.

f) The Cultural and Recreational Importance of the Area:

The following is a quote from the thesis referred to earlier. The Grey stree complex ...'contains some of the most luxurious Indian cinemas in South Africa, and its leading restaurants, a hotel that ranks among the best Indian hotels in the country, and a Mosque that is regarded as the largest in the Southern hemisphere'¹⁾. The Mosque referred to, which stands on consecrated ground, is attended by thousands at noon on Fridays and at regular intervals by up to 8000 people at a time on holy days.

The broad area also contains the M.L. Sultan Technical College, an institution of vital significance for the whole of the Natal economy, which, since it serves the entire community and offers a wide range of evening classes for workers, requires a central location.

Other organisations and establishments of important cultural, religious and recreational significance include:

Seventeen community halls (including the Orient Hall which is usually fully booked for cultural activities six months in advance);

Three churches for non-Whites;

Three temples and the mosque already referred to, the spiritual value of which is impossible to transplant to alternative areas;

Four welfare agencies and one hospital;

Twenty-one restaurants and tearooms;

Six cinemas.

1) D. S. Rajah: *Op. Cit.*, p. 261.

Even in the relatively smaller Grey street North area and surrounds, 10 schools, 3 halls, 3 churches, 1 sports ground, 1 Indian hospital and the technical college have a combined municipal valuation of over R2,000,000¹⁾.

It needs to be stressed that these organisations, without exception, serve the entire Indian Community of Durban or particular cultural groups within the entire community. The activity of such organisations is not local or even regional within the city, and the function they perform could not be effectively performed from any of the widely scattered Indian residential areas.

II. WHY HAS SO LITTLE DEVELOPMENT OCCURRED IN THE GREY STREET COMPLEX?

Low rates of development in the area in recent years have given rise to the fear that the area might deteriorate into a slum in years to come. An actual fact rate of growth in the area over the past seven years, although low (1.2% p.a., 1959 to 1966) has almost equalled that of the industrial 'frame' areas of the White central area (1.5% p.a.). However, the growth rate of the whole central Durban area has been much higher over the same period (2.7% p.a.)²⁾.

The low rate of development in the area can be attributed in large measure to the fact that the use and development of property is regulated in terms of the Group Areas Act. Permits have to be obtained before any property development or re-development can take place. In recent years it has become increasingly difficult for would-be developers to obtain such permission. Furthermore, such permission is granted only on condition that no residential development will take place, and that premises on the ground floor will be let to displaced Indian traders; and the permits may be withdrawn at any time. The determination of the premises for occupation by the Indian group has, in recent times often been postponed for up to 10 years despite the granting of a permit for re-development. It would appear also that the granting of permits in recent months has virtually ceased.

The effects of this type of control over the area are fairly obvious. Firstly, even when permission to re-develop could be obtained, the postponement of determinations and conflicting impressions of the intentions of the Government have created a climate of insecurity. This insecurity has

1) Municipal Valuation Roll.

2) Holford, et. al. *Op. Cit.*, p. 66.

also affected the chances of bonds and loans being raised for development. Furthermore, the requirement that ground floor premises be let to 'small-time' displaced traders without the required experience of central area trading has constituted an economic discouragement, as has the condition that high-rise buildings cannot benefit from the demand for residential space. The climate of insecurity has even discouraged many owners from properly maintaining their premises, with the result that general shabbiness is becoming more and more marked in the area¹⁾.

There is no denying that even under ideal circumstances the traditional and old-fashioned business orientation of many property-owners would have retarded development in the area, but it is also well-known that under more favourable circumstances many other developers would have commenced developments which would ultimately transform the character of the entire area. As Lord Holford and Professor Kantorowich have observed ... 'the few recent offices and shopping centre projects are developments not dissimilar from those elsewhere in the C.B.D.'²⁾. Since 1963 five very large projects have been completed, resulting in very high quality property developments.

III. THE FUTURE OF THE GREY STREET COMPLEX IF IT IS ALLOWED TO REMAIN AN AREA FOR INDIAN OWNERSHIP AND OCCUPATION:

In their planning report, Lord Holford and Professor Kantorowich forecast authoritatively that, even assuming the continuation of the present disadvantageous conditions, the Grey street complex is likely to develop at the rate of 1.6% p.a. between 1966 and 1985³⁾. They estimate that this development would result in a relative decline in residential use, from 39% of total floor space in 1966 to 24% in 1985⁴⁾. Thus, it would appear, at the very least, that the Grey street complex is not likely to stagnate if left in the hands of the Indian group. Fears of dense residential development in the future would also appear to be largely unfounded. Residential

1) These effects are discussed in Rajah, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 264-267: Holford et. al. *Op. Cit.*, p. 71, and these results have been substantiated by numerous personal interviews conducted for the purpose of this report.

2) Holford, et. al. *Op. Cit.*, p. 71.

3) Holford, et. al. *Op. Cit.*, p. 78.

4) Ibid. p. 80.

use amounting to roughly 24% in the future would not appear to be excessive; in this regard it should be borne in mind that presently the White 'hard core' shopping and office district of the central area has a residential component amounting to as much as 13% of total floor space, which is scarcely noticable. Development in the area since 1963 has tended to involve changes from residence to business, and this trend must continue in the future.

Despite controls and the displacement of many surrounding non-White residential areas, the Grey street complex has not stagnated in recent years, despite some negative outward manifestations and a lack of re-development. Research has shown that the growth of sales since 1960 has been higher in the Grey street complex than that in the White central shopping area. Since 1964, the growth in the value of sales tapered off somewhat, but from 1964 up to 1967 it was nevertheless only slightly lower than that of the White central shopping area, and markedly higher than growth in the non-central areas of Durban¹⁾.

The same study has suggested that the climate for business remains favourable in the area, that the businessmen value their central location very highly indeed (virtually none seeing any advantages in moving to the residential areas), and that they intend adding considerably to the range of goods sold in the future²⁾. There seems to be very little evidence that the area will deteriorate into a central slum.

With the general economic development of the Indian community, the demand for business services is likely to grow. This is a type of office development which can only be accommodated in a central business district like the Grey street complex. This type of development inevitably enhances the character of an area.

If the area is proclaimed an Indian area, it can be expected that considerable capital will flow into the area, both from Natal and the Transvaal where Group Areas proclamations have recently restricted the scope for Indian business in Johannesburg and elsewhere. It would appear reasonable to assume in fact, that if restrictions on the area were lifted, growth would be

1) L. Schlemmer, H.L. Watts and E. Higgins: *Trends in Growth, Space Requirements, and the Location of Retail and Personal Service Establishments in Metropolitan Durban*: Institute for Social Research, University of Natal, 1968. p. 57.

2) Ibid, pp. 73, 79, 86.

such as to exceed the predictions of Lord Holford and Professor Kantorowich, and that the residential component in the area would be severely reduced by the normal process of displacement of residences by office and light industrial development. There seems little doubt that with the security for developers which a favourable proclamation would bring, the area would be transformed in the next two decades.

IV. DO THE WHITES NEED THE INDIAN CENTRAL AREA?

No doubt many White developers could profit from a proclamation of the area or parts of it in favour of the White group. However, there seems to be little justification for such a step from a planning point of view.

If zoned for White occupation, the appropriate major form of development would probably be 'high rise' residential flats; insufficient demand exists for other forms of development at present to make the area attractive.

Such residential development would, however, be discouraged for many years to come by the prevailing non-White character of the area, a character which no conceivable legislation could alter in a short space of time. For this reason the area would probably experience dismal stagnation for a long period. Some development could occur in regard to warehousing and light industry - development which, in our opinion, could detract from surrounding areas.

There seems little doubt that considerable scope for expansion and re-development of the White central area exists in the area immediately to the West of the present railway station, in the area between the main shopping area and the beachfront, in the area between Smith street and the Esplanade, and Westwards up Smith and West streets. Holford, et.al. have observed that such expansion and re-development has already commenced, and adduce evidence to show that a high proportion of existing properties in the areas mentioned are 'soft', i.e. potentially available for demolition. They predict an increase in flat development in the area between the City Hall and the Beach, development which, they claim, is not likely to absorb the re-development potential of the area. They also predict that the centre of the gravity of office development in the 'hard core' will move South towards the Bay, a process which has already commenced¹⁾. These conclusions are,

1) Holford, et. al. *Op. Cit.*, pp. 70, 72, 82, 86.

in the main, supported by those of another investigation¹⁾. Furthermore, with the planned removal of the central railway station, an area virtually as large as the present 'hard core' of the central business district will become available for expansion of the business area. This point has been stressed by the City Engineer in his report in regard to the Group Areas Enquiry.

Thus, there seems very little to suggest that the Grey street complex is in any way retarding or limiting the expansion of the White central area.

On the other hand, there is a lot to suggest that the White central area would suffer if Indian business rights were curtailed in the Grey street complex. The White and Indian central business districts are to a considerable extent functionally interdependent and important business linkages exist between the two areas. In particular White banking and wholesale concerns are likely to be adversely affected by the removal of Indians from the Grey street area. A range of business services in the White area will also suffer.

V. GENERAL:

- a) What the Indians will lose if the Area is
proclaimed for White occupation:

The losses to the Indian community of an unfavourable proclamation should be abundantly obvious from the foregoing discussion. A few additional points require to be made.

The Grey street complex is one of the few remaining areas where this enterprising section of the South African community can benefit from trade with non-White workers near a major employment area²⁾, a benefit which White businessmen throughout the country continue to enjoy in full measure. Furthermore, no Indian group area could support a specialised shopping area such as the Grey street complex for many years to come³⁾. In addition, the area houses numerous types of higher order services which cannot be effectively decentralised because they have to be accessible to all parts of the

1) L. Schlemmer, *Op. cit.*, pp. 63 - 66.

2) L. Schlemmer, H.L. Watts & E. Higgins, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 25, 91 - 92.

3) Rajah, *Op. cit.*, p. 268.

widely dispersed Indian community. In Durban the Indian community have an urban structure which represents, as it were, a city within a city. The removal of Indian rights in the central area would mean that the Indian 'city' would have to become completely decentralised. There is no completely decentralised city in the world. It is too much to expect of the Indian community in Durban.

Consideration should also be given to what the Indian group has already lost. Up to 1970 nearly 38,000 Indian families had been disqualified in terms of the Group Areas Act, affecting over 200,000 individuals, roughly one-third of the Indian population. Compared with this number 1318 White families had been affected, an insignificant proportion. How do these facts square with the intentions officially stated when the Act was passed, that it would be 'based on justice' and that 'the object is achieved without recourse to discrimination between the various races'¹⁾.

If the Indian community loses the Grey street complex, or any part of it, the material loss, quite apart from the enormous cultural and social loss, will be enormous. Already a pattern has emerged whereby members of the Indian community pay up to three times or more than Whites have to pay for land in the restricted Indian group areas²⁾. This fact, as well as sharply rising building costs, will make it impossible for the Indian community to replace the existing development if they are denied rights in the area.

b) What will a Proclamation Unfavourable to the Indian Community achieve?

The demand for labour in Durban is such that, in time to come, more and more Indians are likely to find employment in commerce and finance in the White central city area, irrespective of whether the Indian central area is zoned for White occupation or not. Furthermore, despite any legal measures, the realities in regard to available housing, the availability of alternative trading sites, as well as those which bear upon patterns of daily movement of non-Whites in the area are such that the area will retain

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- 1) *Hansard*: Vol. 18, 7452. Speech by the Honorable Minister T.E. Donges in sponsoring the Act.
 - 2) See Memorandum by Central Durban Indian Area Protection Committee, *Op. cit.*, p. 34. Institute of Race Relations, *The Indian South African*: 1967, pp. 18 - 19.

a non-White character for years to come, accompanied by probable stagnation and decline.

The Indian community is so developed as to need central city services and facilities. Without the Grey street complex they would have to use the services in the White central business district. This will lead to greater intermingling than exists at present, hence totally defeating the object of the removal of Indian rights in the central area.

Apart from shattering the morale of a co-operative and law-abiding section of the community, a proclamation of the area for White occupation will achieve little in practice within a considerable number of years, even assuming that what it could achieve is worth the suffering and resentment it will cause.

c) Is the Indian Central Area an Isolated Black Spot?

One of the reasons put forward by those who wish to see the Grey street complex zoned for White occupation is that, because of previous population removals in terms of the Group Areas Act, it is a black spot entirely surrounded by White areas and isolated from all other Indian areas. Seen superficially, this is true. However, certain important factors should be considered which contradict this type of argument.

The Indian central area is so situated in relation to major freeways, arterial bus routes and train routes that Indians moving to and from the area will move along routes which will in any case be used by thousands of non-Whites who work in the White central area. Then again, the Indian central area might be separated from Indian residential areas, but it is not separated from an increasingly important Indian employment area - the White central business district. The Indian central area offers these workers valuable day-time facilities. The area is also effectively sealed off from White residential areas by major arterial routes and by non-residential areas. It is not situated in a position which is likely to cause any friction between members of the White and Indian groups.

VI. CONCLUSION:

On the basis of the foregoing discussions it seems fair to state that:

- 1) The Grey street complex is a traditional and distinct Indian area of long standing, and as such it's development has been a natural adjustment to the racial feelings of a large number of Whites and to the fears of competition of some White businessmen.
- 2) It has immense social cultural, religious, and material value for the Indian community throughout South Africa; a value which will increase as the community develops. This value is irreplaceable both in practical and in symbolic terms.
- 3) Without the continued existence and development of the Grey street area, Indian industrial and general economic development in other areas will be severely retarded.
- 4) As a central area, accessible to all parts of the widely dispersed Indian residential areas, it is the only area in which higher order services and specialised shopping facilities for the Indian community can be suitably located. It is impossible to expect the Indian urban economy to become completely decentralised.
- 5) It is a single area in terms of its urban structure, with its Northern and Southern segments as well as certain adjacent unproclaimed Indian areas highly inter-dependent and showing great similarities in development and relative value.
- 6) It is not likely to become an urban slum or a blighted zone, and if present restrictions are lifted, it most probably would develop to enhance the central area of Durban.
- 7) Although residential development in the area evinces certain negative features at present, these are likely to be corrected by natural processes if the area is allowed to develop fully. Its great importance as a residential area at the moment is likely to decline of its own accord with development in years to come. Furthermore, continued residential rights are likely to stimulate healthy development by making reconstruction more profitable in the short run and by providing a local market. With normal

control exercised by the Local Authority and by the Rent Board most possible negative features associated with the residential development could be combatted successfully.

- 8) A consideration of likely future developments within the adjacent White central area does not suggest that the Indian area is required for White expansion or that it is likely to have a negative effect on development in the White central area. Whites do not appear to need the area. In fact, it would appear to be likely that important activities in the White central area, like banking, wholesale trade and business services, would suffer if Indian rights in the central area were curtailed.
- 9) As it exists at present it is a unique area in South Africa, with an interesting Oriental atmosphere in many parts, and it never fails to draw favourable and enthusiastic comment from tourists from abroad. It enriches our city and is a great asset as a tourist attraction.
- 10) Only when viewed superficially can it be seen as a 'black spot' surrounded by White areas. More correctly, it can be seen as an Indian central business district adjacent to other employment zones where all races congregate. It is also effectively sealed off from White residential areas.
- 11) The future stability of South Africa will undoubtedly be dependent to a large extent on the stability and welfare of all constituent groups in the population. If Indians were to lose their rights in the central area it would constitute a severe setback to the material progress of this community. This could have far-reaching political implications.



The Durban City Council, the Town Clerk and the City Engineer, Organised Industry and Commerce in Durban, and the South African Indian Council have formally supported continued Indian rights of various forms in the area. Statements by the Acting Secretary for Community Development on the 4th October 1963, and the Minister of Indian Affairs on the 21st of November 1963¹⁾, were unambiguous in their connotation that Indians would continue to enjoy trading rights and access to community institutions in the area. On the basis of these statements, the recommendations that have already been made, and on the basis of the evidence produced in this memorandum, the Indian community and those Whites who do not wish to see this community completely alienated have every reason to anticipate that the Indian community will not be deprived of the Grey street complex and immediately surrounding Indian areas or any part of these areas.

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- 1) Quoted verbatim in Memorandum by Dentrall Durban Indian Area Protection Committee. *Op. cit.* p. 6.

UNIVERSITY OF NATAL

6th February 1971.

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